



XAT'S THE WAY TO GO

In order to ace the changed format of XAT exam scheduled for January 2019, one needs to keep a few pointers in mind, says **GAUTAM BAWA**

The XLRI conducts the XAT exam for admission into Xavier's Association of Management Institutes (XAMIs). For this academic season XAT will be conducted on January 6, 2019 in an online mode like last year. The only change that the exam undergoes this year is the exclusion of essay writing. But before we delve into the exam-taking strategy, let us look at a few pointers that one needs to keep in mind:

■ There won't be two papers spanning five sections. There will be just one paper comprising four sections. The four sections are Verbal Ability (VA) and Logical Ability (LA), Decision Making (DM), Quantitative Ability (QA) and Data Interpretation (DI), and General Knowledge (GK).

■ The duration for the exam is 180 minutes.

■ There is no sectional time limit but there are sectional cut-offs.

■ It is unclear at this point at which stage of admission, the first shortlisting stage or during final admissions, the marks scored in the GK section will be considered.

■ The DM section of XAT is one of a kind. There will be a mix of behavioural, managerial and mathematical questions. These questions require meticulous analy-

sis. These questions mostly pose ethical, management or HR related dilemmas.

■ The scoring pattern can be a little perplexing. Each question carries 1 mark. For every wrong answer, 0.25 marks are deducted. Also, 0.05 marks are deducted for every un-attempted question, beyond 8 questions.

■ The XAT offers 5 options for each objective question.

The best way to tackle the differences is to take marks and solve previous year papers in the online format. This will help the students get better acquainted with the format of the paper.

VA & LA

Start with the verbal section. Forty minutes would be ideal for this section. Reading comprehension (RC) comprise 50% of this section. It is important to read the passage carefully and understand what is being asked in the question. Also, be wary of the traps set by the question setter. There would be three-four lengthy RCs. It's important to look at answering 70% of the questions with an accuracy of 85%+plus. This would ideally take about 25 minutes.

Fill in the blanks and para jumble questions wouldn't take too much time. You should look at attempting most questions from

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this topic.

The XAT is known to throw in a surprise by setting a comprehension type questions on a poem. Try to focus on the inferences here since questions wouldn't generally be factual here. This section comprises 24-26 questions. An attempt of 18-20 with 80% accuracy, in 40 minutes, would be close to a 98%+plus. The cutoff would be around 11-12 max.

DM & AR

This section tests the students' ethical bend and contrary to perception and is the easiest section to score in. The best practice for this section is from the previous year XAT question papers, and the trick is to get into the mindset of the paper setter and analyse the logic behind the mentioned scenarios. Each DM case carries an objective that needs to be fulfilled. While attempting the question you must look for an option that fulfils this objective and not the option that sounds best.

It is ideal to spend around 40 minutes on this section. This would span about 7 situational cases and one of them would be mathematical in nature while the others would be situational. Aim to attempt 18-20 questions with 80% accuracy. A score of 11+plus would ensure that the cutoff is cleared.

QA & DI

The final section in this saga is QA and DI. The best way to attempt this section is to tell yourself that you have 65 minutes to answer 15 of the 26-28 questions in this section. Yes, an attempt of 15 with 80% accuracy will help you scale all cutoffs with ease.

Start by first solving questions from your areas of strengths. Solve questions from Arithmetic and Algebra and then move to Numbers. In DI there may appear some unseen graphs and pictorial depictions, but they may not be necessarily complex. Attempt the DI caselets and see if you can solve it without taking an excess amount of time. I would recommend spending around 6-8 minutes per caselet and aim to solve a couple of questions from each.

The last section that is GK, the aim should be to score more than 5 marks. The way to prepare for this section is to be thorough with the current affairs of at least the last 6 months. The time one should spend on this section is 10 minutes.

The time remaining should be spent on the section which helps in maximising your overall score. It is better to leave a question unanswered, if you are not sure about it, than fetch a negative marking.

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